ISLAMIC MANNERS

A Brief Collection of Fundamental Etiquette in Islam

SHAYKH ABDUL FATTAH ABU GHUDDAH

(Rahimahullah)

MADRASAH IN'AAMIYYAH
CAMPERDOWN

Islamic Manners

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Islamic Manners

By:
Shaykh 'Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah
رحمه الله تعالى

A Brief Collection of Fundamental Etiquette in Islam

Translated by:
Muhammad Ibn Moulana Haroon Abasoomar

Madrasah In'aamiyyah Camperdown

Title:	Islamic Manners
Compiled by:	Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Guddah رحمه الله تعالى
Translated by:	Moulānā Muhammad Ibn Moulānā Hārūn Abāsoomar
First Edition:	Ramadhan 1429 A.H. September 2008
Published by:	Madrasah In'āmiyyah P.O. Box 39 Camperdown 3720 South Africa
Tel:	+27 031 785 1519
Fax:	+27 031 785 1091
Email:	alinaam@alinaam.org.za.

CONTENTS

TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Etiquette holds an esteemed place in Islām.

In Sūrah Tāhā, Allāh ﷻ instructed Nabī Mūsā عليه السلام to adopt the correct etiquette when he arrived at the blessed valley of Tuwā.)

Allāh ﷻ said: *(O Mūsā) remove your shoes, for you are in the blessed valley of Tuwā"* (*Surah Taha: 12*)

So important is its role that the 'Ulamā have said:

الدِّينُ هُوَ الأدبُ كُلُّه

"Our entire dīn is based on etiquette"

Passing on etiquette as insignificant generally leads to the abandoning of deeds that are sunnah, which leads to the discarding of a wajib (compulsory) act and so on.

Imām 'Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak رحمه الله تعالى said[1]:

---

[1] Kitābu-Tahajjud of Al-Ishbīlī (R.A.) pg. 132.

"If I leave out a single etiquette of Islam, I fear that Allāh ﷻ will deprive me of all that He has bestowed me with."

In this booklet, the honourable Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah[2] رحمه الله تعالى has listed a few pertinent but often neglected Islāmic manners. The manners of Islam are many and are therefore impossible to be encompassed in a brief booklet as this one. However, if the few that are mentioned in here are implemented, one could then endeavour to progress further inshā Allāh.

Every effort was made to present a precise and accurate translation[3]. In doing so I was assisted by the tireless efforts of Hafez Zeyad Danka, a student of the 5th year Alim class. (may Allāh ﷻ continue to bless him)

The footnotes of the original were not translated except were necessary.

This subject is very vast and could be expanded in future editions inshā Allāh.

---

[2] See end of book for a brief biography of the author.

[3] A previous edition was also used in the process.

Lastly, I beseech Allāh ﷻ for his acceptance and that He ﷻ makes this a source of benefit for all. (Ā*mīn*).

Muhammad Ibn Moulānā Hārūn Abāsoomar

15 Sha'ban 1429 A.H.

17 August 2008

PREFACE

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

May the best of praise and glory be to Allāh ﷾, the Lord of the universe. May the choicest of peace and salutations be on His messenger Muhammad ﷺ, his family and his pious followers who follow his guidance and etiquette. O Allāh! Guide us to follow them in words and actions until we die.

This is a brief booklet concerning “The manners of Islām” in which I have gathered selected texts on this subject. The ahādīth cited in this booklet are either sahīh (authentic) or hasan (sound).

The **reason** for me compiling this booklet is that I have seen many of my beloved brothers and sisters disregarding these etiquettes and misinterpreting them. In doing so, I hope to remind them of these manners. I

do not claim to be superior or less in need of practising these manners, but I do so because of the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil and in observance of the order of Allāh ﷻ:

“And remind because a reminder is beneficial to the believers.” (sūrah Az-Zāriyāt: 56)

May Allāh ﷻ enable us all to benefit from good reminders and may He make this of benefit to me as well as to the reader. May Allāh ﷻ protect and guide us in this life and in the hereafter.

(Shaykh) Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رحمه الله تعالى

Riyādh

Saudi Arabia

1 Muharram 14

INTRODUCTION

The religion of Islām has rules of etiquette and a moral code regarding every aspect of life. These apply to the whole community; the old, the young, men and women.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Women are the counterparts of men." [Sunan Abī Dāwud]

Hence, what is required of men, in adhering to Islamic manners, is required of women; for together they form the Muslim society and it is through them that Islām is portrayed and identified.

NOTE: These manners encompass even **the slightest** of acts such as entering, or leaving the toilet and the posture of sitting and cleaning one's self therein. At the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, one of the polytheists mockingly said to Sayyidunā Salmān Al-Fārisī رضي الله عنه, "Your Prophet has taught you everything, even the manners of going to the toilet." Sayyidunā Salmān رضي الله عنه answered, "Yes, our Prophet ﷺ forbade us from facing the qiblah when urinating or excreting." Sayyidunā Salmān رضي الله عنه continued, "The Prophet ﷺ forbade us from using the right hand

when cleaning ourselves and commanded us to use at least three stones for cleaning.” [Sahīh Muslim]

THE IMPORTANCE OF APPEARANCE

Distinct Muslim Personality

Islām advocates this etiquette and stresses it so as to perfect the Muslim personality and to bring about harmony among people. There is no doubt that adopting such manners and virtues adds beauty to a Muslim's style, makes his personality attractive and brings him closer to the hearts and minds of others. The following manners and etiquette form part of the essence of Islām and is from amongst its objectives and aims. **Calling it "etiquette" by no means implies that it is marginal to life and social behaviour**. It does not mean a person has the option of ignoring these practices or that they are merely preferable to adopt.

Imām Al-Qarāfi رحمه الله تعالى says in his book 'Al-Furūq', while discussing the point that manners rank higher than deeds: "Know well that a small amount of etiquette is better than a whole lot of good actions."

Ruwaim رحمه الله تعالى, a righteous scholar, told his son, "O my son! Make your deeds like salt and your manners like flour (referring to the fact that dough consists of more flour than salt i.e. one should have more manners than deeds). An abundance of good manners with a few good deeds is better than a multitude of good deeds with a few good manners."

Even though some of these rules appear to be simple or common sense, it is still important to highlight their significance. Many of us err in these simple deeds which then blemish our Islamic personality, whereas Islām ought to be unique in its beauty, perfection and traits. On one occasion, our master ﷺ, advised the Sahābah ﷡, "You are on your way to meet your brothers. Don a good dress and mend your conveyance so that you appear distinct among people as a beauty spot (on a body). Allāh ﷻ does not like indecency in manner and conduct." [Sunan Abī Dāwud, Ahmad and Hākim] Therefore, it is important that a Muslim be recognised by his excellent attire, his befitting manner and an appearance that is appealing.

ENTERING OR LEAVING A HOUSE

How to Enter

When entering or leaving a house, do not push the door violently, or leave it to close by itself wildly. Such actions stand in contrast to the politeness of Islām which you are honoured to belong to. Close the door gently with your hand. You may have heard a hadīth reported by Imām Muslim رحمه الله تعالى whereby Sayyidatunā 'Āishah رضي الله عنها quotes Nabī ﷺ as saying, "Gentleness adorns every act and its absence tarnishes it." [Sahīh Muslim]

Greeting

When entering or leaving your house, acknowledge those inside. Use the greeting that is unique to Muslims and which is the label of Islām:

السَّلامُ عَلَيْكُم وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ وَبَرَكاتُه

Assalāmu'alaikum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

"Peace, mercy and blessings of Allāh ﷾ be upon you."

Do not forego this Islamic greeting by replacing it with something else such as "Good Morning" or "Hello" etc. This will lead to the "Salām" eventually being totally abandoned. This greeting is the salient feature of Islām. It is the label of the Muslims which Nabī ﷺ prescribed by his action and statement and it is that which he taught to his attendant, Sayyidunā Anas Ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه when he ﷺ said to him: "O my son, greet your family when you enter (your home) for that is a blessing for you and your family." [Sunan Tirmidhī]

Imām Qatādah رحمه الله تعالى, a prominent Tābi'ī said, "Say salaam to your family when you enter your house, for they are the most worthy of your Salaam." Imām Tirmidhī رحمه الله تعالى recorded from Sayyidunā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "When any of you joins a gathering, he should say Salaam and when he intends to leave, then too, he should say Salaam. The first (the greeting of arrival) is no less important than the second (the greeting when parting)."

Announcing Your Presence

When entering your house, make your presence known to those inside before approaching them, so that they may not be startled by your sudden appearance. Do not appear like one who is searching for a fault in them.

Sayyidunā Abū 'Ubaidah 'Āmir Ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ said, "When my father 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ used to enter the home, he would make his presence known by speaking and raising his voice (so that they may become aware)."

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hambal رحمه الله تعالى said, "When a person enters his house, it is recommended that he coughs or taps his shoes." His son 'Abdullah رحمه الله تعالى said, "When returning home from the masjid, my father used to announce his arrival before entering by tapping his shoes. At times, he would do so by coughing."

Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim رحمهما الله تعالى have recorded from Sayyidunā Jābir ﷺ that Rasūlullāh ﷺ prohibited a person from unexpectedly surprising his family at night, whether returning from travel or

otherwise, as though he mistrusts them or is merely searching for a fault in them.

Seeking Permission to Enter

If family members are resting in their rooms, and you intend to enter that room, seek permission to enter, otherwise you may see them in a condition that you or they, for that matter may dislike. **This applies to your entire household**; your immediate family (mahrams like your parents or children) and others (non-mahrams) as well.

Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى has recorded in his Muwatta from Sayyidunā ‘Atā Ibn Yasār رحمه الله تعالى that a man asked Rasūlullāh ﷺ the following, “Should I seek permission to enter my mother’s room?” “Yes,” answered Rasūlullāh ﷺ. “But we live together in the same house,” said the man. Rasūlullāh said, “Seek permission to go to her.” “But I am her servant,” replied the man. Rasūlullāh ﷺ repeated, “Seek permission! Would you like to see her naked?” “No,” replied the man. “Then seek permission when entering,” said Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

A man came to Sayyidunā ‘Abdullah Ibn Mas’ūd رضي الله عنه and asked, “Should I seek permission to enter my mother’s room?” He answered, “There are certain conditions in which you would rather not see her.”

Sayyidatunā Zaynab, the wife of ‘Abdullah Ibn Mas’ūd رضي الله عنهما said that upon reaching the door, ‘Abdullah رضي الله عنه would cough (according to a narration of Ibn Mājah, he used to make some noise), fearing that he might surprise us and encounter an embarrassing situation.

A man asked Sayyidunā Hudhaifah Ibn Al-Yamān رضي الله عنه, “Should I ask permission to enter my mother’s room?” Sayyidunā Hudhaifah رضي الله عنه replied, “Yes, if you do not seek her permission, you may see what you dislike.”

Sayyidunā Musā رضي الله عنه, the son of Sayyidunā Talhah Ibn ‘Ubaidillāh رضي الله عنه said, “My father went to my mother’s room. I followed him as he entered. He turned towards me and pushed my chest, causing me to sit on the ground. Then he reprimanded me saying, **“How dare you enter without permission!”**

Sayyidunā Nāfi’ رحمه الله تعالى, the freed slave of Sayyidunā ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said, “When any of

Ibn 'Umar's ﷺ children would come of age, Ibn 'Umar ﷺ would assign him/her to another room. He would also not allow any of them to enter his room without permission."

Sayyidunā 'Atā Ibn Abī Rabāh رحمه الله تعالى asked Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما, "Should I seek permission when entering the room of my two sisters?" "Yes," replied Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbas رضي الله عنهما. He said, "But they are in my foster care, I support and provide for them." Ibn 'Abbas رضي الله عنهما asked, "Would you be pleased see them naked?" He then read the Qur'anic verse:

وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنْكُمُ الْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا

كَمَا اسْتَأْذَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ

"And when the children among you come of age, let them seek permission, as those senior to them in age do." (Surah an-Nur: 59).

Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنهما concluded, “Seeking permission is obligatory for all people.”

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ said, “A person should seek permission when entering the room of his father, mother, brother and sister.”

Sayyidunā Jābir ﷺ also said, “A person should seek permission when entering the room of his children, brother, sister, father or mother, even if she is old.”

Most of these narrations have been recorded by Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله تعالى in his book, ‘Al-Adabul Mufrad’, while some of them have been quoted by Ibn Kathīr رحمه الله تعالى under the above-mentioned verse.

Be Quiet While Others Are Asleep

If you enter a place where people are asleep, whether at night or during the day, be quiet and gentle. Be considerate. Do not cause any undue noise when entering or exiting. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “Whoever is deprived of gentleness is deprived of all sorts of goodness.”

Sayyidunā Al-Miqdād Ibn Al-Aswad ﷺ said, “We used to keep aside the Prophet’s ﷺ share of the milk and when he came back at night, he would greet us with a voice loud enough for those awake to hear, without disturbing those who were asleep.” (Sahīh Muslim and Sunan Tirmidhī)

In addition, whenever Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to offer Salāh at night, he would recite the Qur’ān with a voice that pleased those that were awake, without disturbing those that were asleep.

Knocking and Ringing

When you are at the door of your brother, friend, associate or someone you wish to visit, knock at the door in a pleasant way which is sufficient to make your presence known. Do not unethically knock loudly or violently as a thug or an oppressor would do, thereby frightening its occupants.

A woman came to Imām Ahmad Ibn Hambal رحمه الله تعالى, seeking his opinion on a religious matter. She knocked at his door loudly. He came out saying, "This is the banging of a policeman!" (In other words, it is not befitting to knock in this manner.)

Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله تعالى reported in 'Al-Adabul Al-Mufrad' that the Sahābah ﵃ used to knock on the door of Rasūlullāh ﷺ with the tips of their nails (out of respect for him).

This soft and gentle knocking is appropriate when the inmates of the home are close to the door. As for those who are further away from the door, it is appropriate to knock on their door, or ring the bell loud

enough to enable them to hear it, without banging. In this regard, the following hadīth was mentioned earlier, "Gentleness adorns every act and its absence tarnishes it." In addition, Imām Muslim رحمه الله تعالى reported that Rasūlullāh ﷺ also said, "*Whoever is deprived of kindness is deprived of all good things*."

One should allow sufficient time between two knocks, to enable those making wudhu, performing salāh or eating, to finish without rushing. Some 'ulamā have suggested that this interval be equal to the duration of four rakā'āts of salāh since it is possible that a person may have just commenced the salāh before you knocked on the door.

If after three intervalled knocks, you feel that if the person you came to see was not busy, he would have answered you, then leave, for Rasūlullāh ﷺ has said, "When any of you seeks permission thrice, and he is not granted permission, then he should leave." [Sunan Abī Dāwūd]

While waiting for permission, do not stand in front of the door. Rather, stand to the right or to the left.

When Rasūlullāh ﷺ would come to someone's door, he would avoid facing the door directly. Instead, he would stand to the right or to the left of the entrance. [Sunan Abī Dawūd]

Answering: 'Who Is It?'

When you knock at the door of your brother and you are asked, "Who is it?" then identify yourself, by stating your known name. **Do not say "me", "someone" or "somebody"** for these words do not inform him as to who is at the door. It is incorrect for you to expect your voice be known to the person whom you are visiting since voices and tones resemble each other and can be confusing. Also, not every person in the home you are visiting may be able to recognise your voice.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ discouraged the one knocking at the door from saying, "It's me" since this doesn't give a full meaning.

Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim رحمهما الله تعالى reported that Sayyidunā Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh ؓ said, "I came to

Rasūlullāh ﷺ and knocked on his door. He asked, "Who is it?" I answered, "It's me." Rasūlullāh ﷺ **disapprovingly** said, "Is it me? Is it me?!" It is for this reason that the Sahābah ؓ used to mention their names whenever they were asked, "Who is it?"

Sayyidunā Abu Dhar ؓ said, "While walking out one night, I saw Rasūlullāh ﷺ walking by himself. I opted to walk in the shade of the moon, but he turned around and saw me. He then asked, "Who is there?" I replied, "It's Abu Dhar."

Sayyidatunā Ummu Hānī رضي الله عنها, a cousin of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the sister of Sayyidunā Alī Ibn Abī Tālib ؓ said, "I came to see Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He was taking a bath and his daughter Sayyidatunā Fātimah رضي الله عنها was screening him. He asked, "Who is this?" I replied, "I am Ummu Hānī."" (Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim)

When you visit a friend of yours with or without an appointment, and he apologizes for not being able to receive you, accept his apology. His personal affairs and the condition of his house is best known to him. It is

possible that something may have come up or that his personal circumstance does not allow him to receive you at that moment. He has the right to ask to be excused.

The famous Tābi'ī, Qatādah Ibn Di'āmah as-Sadūsī رحمه الله تعالى said, "Do not remain at the door of those who decline your visit. You do have other needs to attend to whilst they are already occupied, therefore they deserve to be excused."

Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى used to say, "Not all people can disclose their reasons."

In this light, when it came to visiting, our pious predecessors used to say to their hosts, "Perhaps you are pre-occupied and cannot attend to us," thus making them feel at ease in case they wanted to be excused. Due to the importance of this etiquette, Allāh ﷻ says, whilst mentioning the etiquette of visiting and seeking permission:

وَإِنْ قِيلَ لَكُمُ ارْجِعُوا فَارْجِعُوا هُوَ أَزْكَى لَكُمْ

"If you are asked to go back, go back, that makes for greater purity." (Surah An-Nur: 28)

Many hosts become compelled and disturbed by the visit of someone whom they did not want to attend to under the circumstances, and **may resort to lying**. Not only do their children learn these bad manners, but such behaviour may lead to ill feeling and hatred in the hearts.

The Qur'ānic etiquette provides a better alternative to such unpleasantness and protects us from lying. It allows the host to kindly present a reason to visitors and asks that they accept it in good faith.

"If you are asked to go back, go back, that makes for greater purity."

Control Your Eyes

When seeking permission to enter the home of someone, avoid glancing at its interior or within its privacy. This is shameful and detrimental. Sayyiduna Sa'd Ibn 'Ubādah ﵁ said, "A man came to seek permission to enter the door of Rasūlullāh ﷺ while

facing the door way. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “Turn this way.” Rasulullah ﷺ then turned him away and ordered him to move further away from the door, saying, “The act of seeking permission has actually been ordained to prevent intrusion.” [Sunan Abī Dāwud & Tabarānī]

Sayyidunā Thaubān ﵁ recounted that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “A person is not allowed to look inside a house before being permitted. If he does so (looks inside without being permitted), it is as though he has entered (intruded), which is forbidden.” (Al-Adabul Mufrad)

Sayyidunā Abū Hurairah ﵁ reports that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “Once the gaze enters (the home), there remains no use for permission thereafter.” (Al-Adabul Mufrad, Sunan Tirmidhī & Sunan Abī Dāwud).

‘Ammār Ibn Sa’īd Al-Tujībī رحمه الله تعالى stated that Sayyidunā ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﵁ said, “Whoever fills his eyes with the sight of the interior of a house, before being permitted, is a wrongdoer.” (Al-Adabul Mufrad)

Sayyidunā Sahl Ibn Sa’d رضي الله عنه said that a man peeped through a hole into the room of Rasūlullāh ﷺ while he was scratching his head with a small comb. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw the intruder, he told him, “Had I known you were looking, I would have poked your eye with this. Seeking permission was actually prescribed to prevent intrusion.” (Sahīh Bukhārī & Sahīh Muslim)

ETIQUETTES WITHIN THE HOME

Removing Your Shoes

When entering the house of your host, or even your own home, be gentle in your manner of entering and leaving. Lower your eyes and your voice. You should take off your shoes at an appropriate spot and set them in an orderly fashion. Do not forget the etiquette of wearing and removing shoes. Put on the right shoe first and remove the left one first.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "When you put on your shoes, begin with the right and when removing them begin with the left, so that the right shoe be the first to be put on and the last to be taken off." (Sahīh Muslim)

Before entering your house or that of your brothers, inspect your shoes. If they are dirty, remove the dirt or wipe the shoes against the ground. Islām is a religion of cleanliness and courtesy.

Choosing a Seat

Do not argue with your host regarding the place where he wants you to sit, rather **sit where he asks you to**. If you sit where you want to, you may (accidentally) look into a private area of the house, or you may cause inconvenience to the house inmates. Therefore, it is important to adhere to the suggestion of your host and accept his cordial treatment towards you.

Hāfidh Ibn Kathīr رحمه الله تعالى narrated in Al-Bidāyah Wan Nihāyah that when the honoured companion Sayyidunā 'Adi Ibn Hātim At-Tāī ﷺ reverted to Islām and came to see Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Madinah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ honoured him by seating him on a cushion, while he himself sat on the floor.

Sayyidunā 'Adi ﷺ says, "... then Rasūlullāh ﷺ took me along and upon reaching his house, he took a leather cushion filled with palm fibre and threw it on the floor, "Sit on this," he said, "No, you sit on it," I answered. Rasūlullāh ﷺ insisted, "No, you." So I sat on it while the Prophet ﷺ sat on the floor."

Once Sayyidunā Khārijah Ibn Zaid ﷺ visited Sayyidunā Ibn Sīrīn رحمه الله تعالى. He found Sayyidunā Ibn

Sīrīn رحمه الله تعالی sitting on a cushion on the floor and he (Khārijah رضی اللہ عنہ) also wanted to sit together with him on the floor, saying, "I am content as you are." Sayyidunā Ibn Sīrīn رحمه الله تعالی replied, "In my home, I do not prefer for you what I prefer for myself (since you deserve to be honoured). Sit where you are asked to sit."

Don't sit on the host's seat unless he asks you to, for our Master ﷺ said, "No guest should lead the host in salah while in the home of the host, neither should he sit without consent, at the designated seat of the host." [Sahīh Muslim]

Inspection

When you enter the home of your brother or friend, whether as a visitor or an overnight guest, do not closely examine its contents as an inspector would. Limit your gaze during your stay to what you need to see. **Do not open closets or boxes. Do not inspect a wallet, a package, or a covered object**. This is against Islamic manners and an impolite betrayal of the trust

your host has accorded to you, by allowing you to enter his home and reside therein. Be polite, for this would cultivate love and respect for you in the heart of your host. May Allāh ﷻ protect you and take care of you.

Timing Your Visit

Choose an appropriate time for your visit. Do not visit at inconvenient times such as mealtimes, or when people are sleeping, resting or relaxing. **The length of your visit should be in accordance with your relationship with your hosts,** as well as in accordance to their circumstances and conditions. Do not overstay your welcome by making your visit too long or burdensome.

Imām An-Nawawi رحمه الله تعالى says in his book, "Al–Adhkār", "It is strongly recommended for Muslims to visit pious people, brothers, neighbours, friends and relatives, and to be generous, kind and obliging to them. However, the duration of the visit varies according to the host's circumstances. The visit ought to be conducted in a pleasant manner and at times convenient to them. There are numerous ahādīth and sayings in this regard."

When you address your host, only discuss appropriate topics together with maintaining brevity in

your speech. If you are the youngest in the gathering, then you should only speak when responding to a question posed to you by someone, unless you are certain that your input will be effective, leave an impression and that it will please those present. Do not be lengthy in your speech. Neither should you be careless in your sitting posture, and manner of address.

Greeting a Gathering

When you enter a room, first greet everyone inside. If you want to shake hands with those present, begin with the most knowledgeable, the most pious, the older or those who have similar Islamic distinctions. Do not overlook the most distinguished or most eminent and start with the first on your right. If you cannot decide who is the most reputable, or if those present happen to be of similar status, then start with the elderly, for they are easier to recognise.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “Exalt the elderly, exalt the elderly.” [Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim] Imām Abū Ya’lā and At-Tabarāni رحمهما الله تعالى in Al-Awsat reported

that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Start with the notables." or, he said, "with the elder." (Sahīh Bukhārī)

Sitting Between Two Persons

When you enter a gathering, do not sit between two persons. Rather sit on their left or right side. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "No one is to sit between two people without their permission." (Sunan Abī Dāwud)

When two people are kind enough to make room for you to sit between them, do not sit cross-legged or crowd them out.

Ibnul 'Arabī رحمه الله تعالى quotes a sage who said, "Two persons are considered unfair:

(1) a person to whom advice is offered and he takes offence to it, and

(2) a person who is favoured with a seat in a narrow space and he sits crossed-legged." (Adabul Imlā Wal Istimlā)

When you are seated between two people, **do not eavesdrop**, unless it is not a private or secret matter. Eavesdropping is a bad habit and a **sin**.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Whoever listens to people's conversations against their wishes, will be punished by molten lead being poured down their ears on the day of Judgement." (Sahīh Bukhārī)

Take note that it is **inappropriate** for you to whisper to someone sitting next to you if you are in a group of three people. By doing so, you are deserting and isolating the third person which will lead him to entertain the worst of thoughts. Such an act does not befit a Muslim. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has emphatically negated this as the conduct of a Muslim.

Imām Mālik and Abū Dāwud رحمهما الله تعالى reported that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Never will any two (Muslims) whisper to each other in the presence of a third person." The choice of words by Rasūlullāh ﷺ ("never will" not "never should") indicates that such a mistake is not only inappropriate but unimaginable and instinctively despicable.

Sayyidunā ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما was asked, “What if they were four?” “Then it does not matter,” he answered. Meaning, in that case it is not wrong to whisper or to mutter. [Ibid]

RESPECTING THE ELDERLY

Recognize the status of the elderly and give them due respect. When walking with them, walk slightly behind, to the right. Let them enter and exit first. When you meet them, greet them properly and respectfully. When you discuss something with them, let them speak first, and listen to them attentively and graciously. If the conversation **involves debate**, you should remain polite, calm and gentle. Ensure that you speak to an elder in a low tone. When you address him, never forget to remain respectful.

Let me review with you some ahādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ that encourage these polite manners.

Two brothers came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ to discuss a personal matter. The younger brother began to speak. At this Rasūlullāh ﷺ remarked, "The elder, the elder," meaning, give the elder brother his right and allow him to speak first. (Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim)

Sayyidunā 'Ubādah Ibn Samit رضي الله عنه reports that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Whoever does not respect our elders is not of us." Another version reports, "Whoever does

not respect our elders, is not compassionate to our youth, and does not give our scholars due honour is not of us." (Ahmad, Hākim and Tabarānī)

Observe in the following narration how Rasūlullāh ﷺ taught the youth the manners of companionship and the habit of giving priority to elders. Sayyidunā Mālik Ibn Huwairith ؓ said, "I was among a group of youth of similar age that visited Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Madinah for twenty nights. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was very kind and compassionate. He sensed that we might have been longing for our families back home, and enquired about whom we had left behind. When we informed him, he remarked, "Go back to your families, live with them, teach them Islām and inform them of good deeds. At the time of prayer, let one of you call out the adhān and let your eldest lead the salāh." (Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim)

Hāfidh Ibn Rajab Al-Hambalī رحمه الله تعالى has narrated from the Jurist, Imām 'Alī Ibn Mubārak Al-Karkhī رحمه الله تعالى who studied under Imām Qadhī Abū

Ya'lā Al–Hambalī رحمه الله تعالى, himself a jurist, judge and the chief shaykh of the Hambalī School of Law during his time. Imām Alī Ibn Mubārak رحمه الله تعالى says, "One day, Qādhī Abū Ya'lā said to me, while walking with him, "If you had walked with someone you honour, where would you walk?" I replied, "I do not know." He said, "Walk to his right. Place him at the position of the imām in salāh, leave his left side clear, in case he needs to spit or get rid of dirt." [Dhail-Tabaqātul Hanābilah]

Elders are to be Served First

Give precedence to the elderly or to dignitaries ahead of anyone else. After that, you may proceed with those on their right, which is in accordance with the practice of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The evidence supporting this manner in addition to the two ahādīth mentioned above, is illustrated in many ahādīth, some of which are cited below.

Imām Muslim رحمه الله تعالى reported in his Sahīh under the chapter of, “The Manner and Rules of Eating and Drinking” that Sayyidunā Hudhaifah Ibn Yamān ﵁ said, “Whenever we were invited to a meal with Rasūlullāh ﷺ, we would not stretch out for the food with our hands until he reached for it.”

To emphasize the importance of these manners, Imām An-Nawawī رحمه الله عليه, in his book Riyādhus Sālihīn, cited a large collection of Ahādīth and devoted an entire chapter to this subject entitled, “The Chapter of Respecting Scholars, the Elderly, the Dignitaries, Giving

Them Precedence and the Best Seat and Acknowledging their Rank."

Allāh ﷻ said in the Qur'ān:

هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

"Are those who know equal to those who do not know? It is only those who possess understanding that receive admonition." (Surah Az-Zumar: 9)

Sayyidunā 'Uqbah Ibn 'Āmir Al-Badrī Al-Ansārī ؓ stated that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Those who are best at reciting the Qur'ān should lead the people in salāh. If they are equal, then those who are well-versed in the sunnah should lead, if they are equal, then a person who emigrated earlier (from Makkah to Madīnah) should lead. If they emigrated at the same time, then the elder should lead." (Sahīh Muslim)

Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ reported that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Let your wise and intelligent ones

stand close to me (in salāh), then those that are lower than them in rank, and then those that are lower than them in rank, and so on. (Rasūlullāh ﷺ said this thrice)" (Sahīh Muslim)

Sayyidunā Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh رضي الله عنهما said, "After the Battle of Uhud, Rasūlullāh ﷺ buried two martyrs at a time in a single grave. He would ask, "Which of the two memorized more of the Qur'ān?" Upon being informed as to who it was, Rasūlullāh ﷺ would lay him down first." (Sahīh Bukhārī)

Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما stated that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I dreamt I was brushing my teeth with a miswāk when two men approached me. I handed the miswāk to the younger but I was then instructed to hand it to the elder. Accordingly, I handed it to the elder." [Sahīh Muslim]

Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī رضي الله عنه stated that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Part of paying homage to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is to respect an elderly Muslim, whose hair has turned grey, a hāfidh of the Qur'ān, who is neither too strict

nor to lax with regard to it, and a just ruler." (Sunan Abī Dāwud)

Sayyidunā Maimūn Ibn Abī Shabīb ﷺ recounted that a beggar stopped by Rasūlullāh's ﷺ wife, Sayyidatunā 'Āishah رضى الله عنها. She gave him a piece of dry bread. At another time, a properly dressed, well-groomed man passed by her. She let him sit and offered him a meal. When asked about that, she replied, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Treat people according to their status." (Sunan Abī Dāwūd, and Hākim classified it as sahīh)

Imām Al Nawawī رحمه الله تعالى concluded this chapter by citing a hadīth as reported by Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim in which Sayyidunā Samurah Ibn Jundub ﷺ said, "Though I was a young child at the time of Rasulullah ﷺ, I used to listen to what he said and memorize it. Nothing prevents me from narrating my knowledge except the presence of men elder than me." *

Greeting According to the Order of Merit

* The quotations from Imām Nawawī's book end here.

In this light, the sunnah is to start according to the following order of merit: age, knowledge, social status, lineage (like one belonging to the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ), leadership, veterans of Jihād, generosity or similar virtues. Furthermore, the sunnah of hospitality is to start with the most prominent, then to move to those on the right in order to reconcile the ahādīth that instruct starting from the right with the ahādīth which suggest starting with people of virtue.

Some people of weak understanding mistakenly claim that the sunnah is to start with those on your right whoever they may be. They base this on those ahādīth which encourage starting from the right. But this is only correct when those present are all equal or similar in character, status or age. In that case the one on the right of the host should be commenced with. However, if one of them is distinguished with a merit such as old age, then the sunnah is to start with this person, for this is a characteristic which warrants preference.

Imām Ibn Rushd رحمه الله تعالى said in his book "Al-Bayān Wat Tahsil": "As a rule, if the status of those present is equal, one should commence with those on the right, as with every desirable act. However, if a scholar, an honourable person or an elder is present, the sunnah is to start with such a person and then move to his or her right in a counter clockwise fashion.* Rasūlullāh ﷺ was offered milk mixed with water while a Bedouin was sitting on his right, and seated to his left was Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. Rasūlullāh ﷺ drank some and handed it over to the Bedouin saying, "From the right, then to the right."*

Do not proceed to the left even if the person to the left is of a higher status in knowledge, virtue or age, unless those on the right agree to pass their turn. This is in conformity to what Rasūlullāh ﷺ did when he was seated with an elder to his left and a young man on his right when he was offered a drink. After drinking, he

---

* In this manner one will not be expressing one's personal preference of some over others.

* In this instance, Nabi ﷺ being the most honourable was the first to drink. Hence, the drink was offered from his right thereafter.

asked the young man: "Would you give me permission to pass it to those elderly ones on the left? The boy answered, "By Allāh, no. I would not favour anyone with my share of your drink." "Rasūlullāh ﷺ willingly put the drink in the child's hand indicating that it was his right."

Therefore, the general rule is to start on the right if those present are equal in merit. However, if there is a person who is distinguished by a respectable trait or is one of virtue, then undoubtedly to start with that person would be more appropriate. (Then move to the right.)

If we were to follow the alleged rule that, hosts ought to start with the persons who are on their immediate right, then this could result in starting with a child, a servant, a driver, or a guard, who may even be a non-Muslim, at the expense of more prominent guests such as a dignitary, a revered scholar, a leader, a parent, a grandparent, or an uncle. Would it be acceptable by the Sharī'ah and its refined manners to forsake honouring and starting with persons of honour

in favour of starting with a child, a servant, a driver and then to proceed to a person of higher status? Also, it is possible that there may be ten persons or more, sitting on the right, before the most honourable person. In that case, he may only be reached after ten or even twenty more people. Islamic manners definitely do not accept this irregular conduct.

However, if someone asks for a drink, they have a right to be served before anybody else regardless of his age or status. It should then be served to those on his right. If this person notices someone elder or of a higher status showing desire for the drink, he may willingly give up his right in favour of that person. When preferring others to oneself, one has practiced the Islamic manner of unselfishness and one will achieve great virtue, honour and earn great rewards.

Respect of Parents

Observe complete respect and reverence to your father and mother for they are most worthy of your

consideration. A man came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and asked, "Who is most worthy of my cordial conduct?" He answered, "Your mother! Your mother! Your mother! Then your father, then the closest to you and then the closest to you." (Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim)

Sayyidunā Hisham Ibn 'Urwah ؓ recounted that his father related to him that Sayyidunā Abu Hurairah ؓ saw a man walking ahead of another. He asked him, "How is this man related to you?" "He is my father," answered the man. Sayyidunā Abū Hurairah ؓ told him: "Do not walk ahead of him, do not sit until he sits and do not call him by his name." (Al-Adabul Mufrad & Musannaf 'Abdul Razzāq)

Imām Ibn Wahab رحمه الله تعالى has related that a student of Imām Mālik Ibn Anas رحمه الله تعالى, by the name of Imām Abdul Rahmān Ibn Al-Qāsim Al-Utaqī Al-Misrī رحمه الله تعالى said, "Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى was once engaged in teaching the 'Muwatta of Imām Mālik'. He suddenly stood up for a long while and then sat again. When he was asked why he did so, he answered, "My mother

came to ask me something. Since she was standing, I stood up out of respect. When she left, I sat down again."" (Tartībul Madārik)

The revered Tābi'ī, Tāwūs Ibn Kaisān رحمه الله تعالى said, "It is part of the sunnah to respect four persons: an ālim, a leader, an elder and a father. It is considered rude that a man calls his father by his name." (Tārīkh Madīnatis San'ā) At the end of his book on Mālikī law entitled, "Al-Kāfī", Imām Ibn 'Abdul Barr رحمه الله تعالى says, "Kindness to parents is an obligatory duty but it is only easy for the one for whom Allāh makes it such. Kindness means, to be humble with them, to speak to them politely, to look at them with love and respect, to speak in a tone that does not surpass theirs unless they are hard of hearing, to give them complete access to your own wealth and to offer them the best of your food and drink."

One should not walk ahead of one's parents, nor should one speak first to them when it is their right of doing so. One should try one's utmost to avoid upsetting them, and should seek their pleasure as

much as possible. Pleasing one's parents is one of the most virtuous acts.

One must hasten to respond to the call of one's parents. If one is engaged in nafl salāh, one should shorten it and respond to them immediately. One should only express kind words to them.

In return, **the parents should assist the child** in his endeavour of being kind to them. By the parents being more accommodating and understanding, they would be assisting their child in his endeavour to being obedient to them, for indeed when it comes to fulfilling the command of Allāh ﷻ, it is only with the assistance of Allāh ﷻ that people can obey Him and fulfil His commands.*

* Therefore, it would be easier for the child to be obedient to the parent if the parent assists him to do so. (translator)

ARRIVING FROM A JOURNEY

If you are travelling to visit someone or if you are about to receive guests, whether those in question are your parents, relatives, peers or friends of a different age, make sure that your hands, feet and socks are clean and your appearance and clothing are neat. Also, ensure that your attire befits the occasion and the one you are meeting, because cleanliness and an appearance which is orderly and harmonious brings pleasure to the eye. Never undermine the importance of your appearance for that would certainly mar the pleasure of the meeting, while dulling the enjoyment of those you meet.

In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ directed his companions upon returning from a journey: "You are on your way to meet your brothers. Don a good dress and repair your conveyance so that you appear distinct among people as a beauty spot (on a body). Allāh ﷻ does not like indecency in manner and conduct."

Try to **offer a gift** to your host and likewise present your guests with a present in exchange of theirs because the exchanging of gifts on joyous occasions adds to its delight. A gift, however symbolic, will leave behind happy memories of the occasion. Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Exchange gifts and thereby acquire the love of each other." (Bukhārī in Al-Adabul Mufrad)

Our pious predecessors used to leave their host with a gift, even if it was something as simple as a miswāk.

Rights of the Guest and Duties of the Host

If you are having a guest overnight, be hospitable and generous. This does not mean that you should exaggerate when providing food and drink to your guest. **Moderation without excess is the sunnah**. You should try your best to make your guests' stay pleasant and comfortable during their state of being awake or asleep. Inform your guests of the **direction of the qiblah** and show them the way to the bathroom and place for wudhu etc.

When you offer your guest a towel after a shower, wudhū or washing hands after meals, make sure that the towel is clean. Do not offer towels, you or your family members have used. It is also a good idea to offer guests some perfume and a mirror. Make sure the toiletries and bathroom accessories they will be using are clean and sanitized. Before leading your guest to the bathroom, inspect it and remove anything you don't want your guest to see.

Your guests may need some rest and a quiet sleep. Spare them the noise of the children and the noise of the house as much as possible. Remove female clothing and belongings from their view. This is a desirable practice that will leave you both feeling comfortable. When meeting your guests, serve them with tact and respect. Dress properly and look your best but do not overdo it. The close relationship between you is no excuse for negligence in your manners or looks. Imām Bukhārī رحمه الله تعالى in Al-Adabul Mufrad reported that our forefathers used to dress appropriately when visiting one another.

If you visit a relative or friend, you should be considerate of your host's circumstances and work commitments. Shorten, as much as possible, the duration of your stay by him, since every person has various duties, obligations and responsibilities, some of which may not be known to you. Be considerate of your hosts and help them with their duties, house chores and obligations. While at your host's house, **do not inspect** and examine every corner, especially when you are invited beyond the guest room, lest you see something that you are not supposed to notice. In addition, do not bother your hosts by asking too many questions.

VISITING THE SICK

It is the right of your Muslim brother that you visit him during the time of illness. This will enhance and nourish the bond of Islām and brotherhood between you. The rewards for this are so great that they cannot be overlooked by one who wishes to increase his good deeds. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "When a Muslim visits his sick brother, he will remain in the *khurfah* of paradise until he returns." Rasūlullāh ﷺ was asked, "What is the *khurfah* of paradise?" He replied, "The harvest of paradise." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "One who goes walking to visit a patient, continues to sink in the mercy of Allāh ﷻ. When he sits, he will be totally immersed in mercy." (Ahmad & Ibn Hibbān in his Sahīh)

Forget not that there are certain etiquettes which will make your visit to an ill person a refreshing and morale-boosting one for him. By abiding by these etiquettes, you will assist in easing his pains and you will also make him more conscious of the rewards that he will gain in return for being patient during his suffering.

The Length of the Visit

Make your visit brief. Sick persons may not be able to withstand such long visits. The length of the visit should not be longer than the duration the Imām sits between the two khutbahs on Friday. It is said that the etiquette of visiting a patient is that you utter your greeting and immediately thereafter you bid farewell to him.

A poet says,

“

And then to remain seated for the blink of an eye,

With many questions do not bother the patient,

A question as brief as two or three words are sufficient.”

That is by asking him, “How are you?”

“May Allāh ﷻ cure you.”

At the end of his book of Mālikī Fiqh, Al-Kāfī, Imām Ibn Abdil Barr رحمه الله تعالى says, “When visiting a healthy or sick person, one should sit where one is told. Hosts know better how to ensure privacy in their home. Visiting an ill person is an emphasized sunnah (*sunnah muakkadah*). The best visit is the shortest. The visitor should not sit for too long, unless they are close friends and the ill person enjoys his company.

Other Manners of Visiting the Sick

One visiting the sick ought to wear clean clothes with a good scent in order to make the patient feel better both spiritually and physically. At the same time *it is improper to wear such fancy clothes that are more appropriate for occasions of happiness*. One should avoid wearing a strong smelling perfume which may inconvenience the sick.

Visitors should **avoid causing distress to the sick** by conveying bad news such as a failing business, a death or similar bad news. Also, visitors should not enquire about the details of the illness for the purpose

of mere conversation. This will not benefit the sick in any way, unless the visitor is a specialized physician. Similarly, visitors should not recommend to a patient any food or medicine that might have helped them or someone else. Such recommendations might lead the ill person, out of ignorance or desperation, to try it, causing further complications or even death.

Do not criticize or object to the treatment by the physician in the presence of the ill person for it might cast doubt in the mind of the sick.

CONDOLENCE AND BREAKING UNPLEASANT NEWS

When you have to break the undesired news of a tragic accident, or the death of a close relative or friend, it is appropriate that you break the news in such a way so as to lessen its impact and make it as mild and gentle as possible. For example, in the case of death, you may say, “Recently, I learned that so and so has been seriously ill and his condition worsened. Today I heard that he passed away. May the mercy of Allāh be with him.”

Begin by giving the name of the person in question. Do not break the news of a death by saying, “Do you know who passed away today?” This unduly manner frightens the listeners and prompts them to expect the worst, namely that the death involves someone close to them who may have been sick or old at that time. Rather, if you commence by mentioning the name of the deceased, this will soften the impact of the news, reducing the listener’s apprehension, while the news will still be conveyed.

Convey the news of fire, drowning, or a car accident etc. in a similar fashion. Prepare the listener for the news in a way that minimizes its impact. Mention the name(s) of the affected person(s) in a diplomatic way, and **don’t shock** your companions or relatives when conveying to them such news. Some people have weak hearts and such bad news may cause them great harm, which may even lead to them fainting and collapsing.

If it is necessary to convey such news, choose the appropriate time. Don’t convey such news at a meal, before going to sleep, or during an illness. Wisdom and tactfulness are the best qualities to handle such a situation.

The Duty of Expressing Condolence

If a relative or a close friend of one of your relatives or friends happens to die, hasten to offer your condolences. You should share in his grief for that is the right of your family member, friend or fellow Muslim. If you can, you should attend the funeral and the burial at the cemetery. This is a highly rewarding gesture, an effective and stern admonition, and a lesson reminding you of the inevitable end of the entire creation.

A poet addressed a deceased person and said,

"While you were alive, you gave me many a lesson, reminder and admonition,

Today your death provides me with the most important lesson."

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "A Muslim owes his fellow Muslim five rights; replying a greeting, visiting the ill, attending the funeral …" (Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim)

Imām Ahmad رحمه الله تعالى reported that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Visit the sick and follow the funeral processions, it will remind you of the hereafter."

The Manner of Offering Condolence

When offering condolences about the plight of a relative, friend or acquaintance, it is ***mustahāb*** (preferable) to make *du'ā* similar to the following du'ā for your deceased brother. This is a *du'ā* which Rasūlullāh ﷺ recited to Ummu Salamah رضى الله عنها at the death of her husband:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لأَبِى سَلَمَةَ وَارْفَعْ دَرَجَتَهُ فِى الْـمَهْدِيِّينَ وَاخْلُفْهُ فِى عَقِبِهِ فِى الْغَابِرِينَ وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلَهُ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَافْسَحْ لَهُ فِى قَبْرِهِ وَنَوِّرْ لَهُ فِيهِ .

"O Allāh! Forgive Abū Salamah, elevate his status among the guided people and look after the family that he left behind. O Lord of the universe! Forgive us and

him, comfort him in his grave and lighten his stay (in the grave).” (Sahīh Muslim)

It is desirable that your conversation with the bereaved person be aimed at lightening the effect of the calamity. This could be done by mentioning the reward of patience over that calamity, the transitory nature of life on earth and that the hereafter is an everlasting abode.

In this respect, it is desirable to reiterate certain verses of the Qur’ān that are connected to that, or some of the well-spoken condolences of our ancestors. You may mention virtues such as the following:

[illegible]

(1) *"Give glad tidings to those who patiently endure, who say when afflicted with a calamity: "To Allāh ﷻ we belong and to Him we return." They are those on whom (descend) blessings and mercy from their Lord, and they are the ones that receive guidance."* (Sūrah Al-Baqarah:155-157)

➔□⬧◗⧫✶✎✂⬧❶ 🖫▪⬂▦⧫☼ ❻✍⬈🖅
🕶⬀☺✵☼⬀◗⧫❒ 🗏 ⧫☠⬁❑□☼▫✈🕶✂
⬁☠➔🗎⧫❻❑⬉♉⬆🕮 ♊♍⬁❑⅄▫⧫❑➔✍
☎ ⧫□⬀☺🕔⧫⑩⬃◗⬂♑🕶✂ ⧫🏱⬁❑⧫③
⬅♊⧫⬉ ⬀⬀⌧❽⇳❍⬉♌ ♊⬀☺⬧▫
•✍⬀⌘⬃⑩⬆🕮⧫❒ ⧫❻🕶□✡♑🕶✂
🗏 ⬀♌🕶⬧▫ ⇳⑨⬧◗⬧▫ ⬧□□✡⬀♐⬂♑🕶✂
⬈□🗐❑⧫⑩⬀⬀⬂♑🕶✂ 🕶⧫👌⧫❒
🡐⬈🕔⧫☞⧫👌 ·⬧⬀◗ ✎🕶⧫⓿⬃☼❻🕶✎🕶✂
⬅⬎⧫⬀⬏ ⧫❻❒⬉❷⬈⬄⬂♑🕶✂

(2) "*Every soul shall have a taste of death and only on the Day of Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense. Only those who are saved from the fire and admitted to Paradise (Jannah) will have attained the object (of life). For the life*

of this world is but good and chattels of deception." (Sūrah Āli-'Imrān:185)

🗄♌👓⬧◻ 👓❑🙰⬀❸■🖬⧫⬊ ⇕♊⧫👌 ❻✍⬈📫
🡐❍⇕♉◆❒ 🗐❼⬧🖃⬀🖮⧫③◆❒ ⮸⌘⛧⮳
⮳✍🕓■🖬❑♑⬂💻👓✁ ❒➔❶ ⮹🖮⛧■📪◆❻
⮸⌘⛢⮳ ⛧✈✁⧫❷⬂📫💣❝👓✁◆❒

(3) *"All that is on earth will perish, but Allāh ﷻ will abide (forever), the face of your Lord, most Gracious and most Generous." (Sūrah Ar-Rahmān: 26-27)*

You may even mention ahādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ such as the following:

اللَّهُمَّ آجرْنِى فِى مُصِيبَتِى وَأَخْلِفْ لِى خَيْرًا مِنْهَا

Allahumma aajir ni fee museebati wa akhlif li khairan minha

(1) "O Allāh! Reward me in my calamity and replace my loss with a better one." (Sahīh Muslim)

إِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَا أَخَذَ وَلَهُ مَا أَعْطَى وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ بِأَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى

(2) "Indeed! Whatever Allāh gives or takes belongs to him and everything is predestined by him." (Sahīh Bukhārī & Sahīh Muslim)

إِنَّ الْعَيْنَ تَدْمَعُ والْقَلْبَ يَحْزَنُ وَلاَ نَقُولُ إِلاَّ مَا يَرْضَى رَبُّنَا وَإِنَّا

بِفِرَاقِكَ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ لَمَحْزُونُونَ

(3) When Rasūlullāh ﷺ mourned the death of his son, Ibrāhīm, he said the above which translates as: "My eyes are tearful. My heart is full of anguish, but we will only say what pleases our Lord. O Ibrāhīm! We are indeed grieved over your separation." (Ibid)

Also, it is very appropriate to use some of the sayings of the pious predecessors in this regard.

(1) Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab ﷺ used to say, "Everyday we are told so and so has just died. Most definitely, one day it will be said: 'Umar has died.'"

(2) The Khalīfah 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul Azīz رحمه الله تعالى said, "The person who has none of his forefathers, between him and Ādam ﷺ alive, is indeed deep-rooted in death."

(3) The illustrious Tābi'ī, Hasan Basrī رحمه الله تعالى said, "O son of Ādam! You are nothing but mere days. Whenever a day passes away, a part of you also passes away."

(4) He also said, "Allāh ordained that the ultimate resting place of believers will be paradise, no less."

(5) Hasan Basri's رحمه الله student, Mālik Ibn Dinār رحمه الله تعالى said, "The wedding of the one who fears Allāh will be on the day of Judgement."

A poet said:

We rejoice at the passage of days;

Whereas each day that passes brings us closer to death.

Another poet said in this regard:

We don't offer condolences to you because we are certain

Of life, but because it is the practice of our Religion;

For, the consoled and the consoling may live today

Tomorrow though, they'll vanish away.

A suitable poem in this regard is:

We die and live every night and day (by sleeping);

One day we will die and move away.

Another poem describes how oblivious humans can be of death:

We in this world are like passengers on a ship of load;

We think it still, but running is the boat.

I have quoted all these appropriate mourning quotations because I have witnessed many people engaging in discussions that do not suit such a sad occasion. This adds to the distress and anguish of the bereaved. This is also contrary to the style and etiquette of Islām.

THE MANNERS OF CONVERSATION

Talk in a Suitable Tone

If you speak to a guest or any other person, whether in a gathering or alone, make sure that your voice is pleasant, with a low audible tone. You may raise your voice in accordance to the need. Raising your voice unnecessarily is contrary to proper manners and indicates lack of respect for the person to whom you are talking. This manner should be maintained with friends, peers, acquaintances, strangers, the young and the old. It is more important to adhere to this with one's parents or someone of their status or those elderly and notable people whom you ought to respect.

The Qur'ān tells us that the advice of Luqmān, The Wise, to his son was:

♊♎👌 ⇳⮝→♎⬂➘👓✂◆❒

🗐 ⮹🖮♎✍⬀❑✽🕒

"And lower your voice," (*Surah Luqmān:19*)

He directed him to speak in a gentle manner, for speaking loudly is detested and ugly.

Verses two and three of Surah Hujurāt read:

[illegible]

“O you who believe! Raise not your voices, above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him as you speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds become vain and you perceive not. Those that lower their voices in the presence of Allāh’s apostle, Allāh has tested their hearts for piety. For them is forgiveness and a great reward.”

Sayyidunā ‘Abdullah Ibn Zubair رضي الله عنهما said that: “After the revelation of these verses, whenever Sayyidunā ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﵁ wanted to address Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he (‘Umar ﵁) would talk as if he was whispering. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would even enquire about some of what Sayyidunā ‘Umar ﵁ said, because he did not hear him well.” (Sahīh Bukhārī)

Hāfidh Adh-Dhahabī رحمه الله تعالى wrote in his biography of Imām Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رحمه الله تعالى, the eminent scholar and great Tābi’ī, that:

“Whenever he was in his mother’s presence, he would talk in such a low tone that you would think that he was ill.” (Tārīkhul Islām, vol. 4 pg. 197.)

In his biography of ‘Abdullah Ibn Awn Al-Basrī رحمه الله تعالى, a student of Imām Ibn Sīrīn رحمه الله تعالى and one of the famous scholars, Hāfidh adh-Dhahabī رحمه الله تعالى noted:

“Once, his mother called him and because he responded with a voice louder than hers, he was fearful and repented by freeing two slaves.”

'Āsim Ibn Bahdalah Al-Kufī رحمه الله تعالى, the famous qārī said, "I visited Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz رحمه الله تعالى and a man spoke loudly. To this Sayyidunā 'Umar رحمه الله تعالى replied: "Stop! You need not talk loudly. **You should only talk loud enough to make your listeners hear**." (Tārīkh Dimashq)

Adopt the Art of Listening

If a person starts telling you **something that you know very well**, you should pretend as if you do not know it. Do not rush to reveal your knowledge of it or to interfere with his speech. Instead, you should show your attention and concentration. The honourable Tābi'ī, Imām 'Atā Ibn Abi Rabāh رحمه الله تعالى said, "A young man would tell me something, I would listen to him as if I never heard it before, **although I may have heard it even before he was born!**"

Khālid Ibn Safwān At-Tamimi رحمه الله تعالى, who was a companion of the two khalifahs, Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn

'Abdul 'Aziz and Khalifah Hishām Ibn 'Abdul Malik رحمهما الله تعالی said, "If a person tells you something which you have heard before, or news that you already know of, do not interrupt him so as to exhibit your knowledge to those present. **This is a sign of being rude and ill mannered**."

The honourable Imām 'Abdullah Ibn Wahab Al-Quraishi Al-Misrī, who is a companion of Imāms Mālik, Laith Ibn Sa'd and Thawri رحمهم الله تعالی said, "Sometimes, a person would tell me a story that I have heard before his parents had wed, yet I listen as if I never heard it before."

Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm Ibn Junaid رحمه الله تعالی said, "A wise man once said to his son, "Learn to listen properly just as you learn to speak properly."" Listening properly means, maintaining eye contact, allowing the speaker to finish the speech, and restraining yourself from interrupting his speech, even if you are aware of what he is saying.

Khatīb Baghdādī رحمه الله تعالی said in a poem:

A talk never interrupt
Though you know it in and out.

DISCUSSIONS AND DEBATES

If you are having difficulty understanding some of what has been said by the speaker, restrain yourself until he finishes, and thereafter ask for clarification gently, politely and with a proper introduction. Do not interrupt a person's talk. This is contrary to the proper manner of listening and stirs up contempt in the heart. However, this is not the case if it is a gathering of studying and learning. In such a case, asking questions and initiating a discussion is desirable if conducted respectfully and tactfully and only after the teacher finishes.

Khalīfah Al-Ma'mūn رحمه الله تعالى said, "Discussion entrenches knowledge more than mere acceptance."

Imām Haitham Ibn 'Adī رحمه الله تعالى, a known scholar and historian as well as, one of the companions of the four khalīfahs, Abū Ja'far Al-Mansūr, Al-Mahdī, Al-

Hādī, and Ar-Rashīd رحمهم الله تعالى said, “The men of wisdom say:

“It is **disrespectful** to overwhelm people as they speak and to interrupt them before they end their speech.”

Answer Only If You Are Asked

If a colleague was asked about something that you know, do not hasten to answer. Instead, you should only say something when you are asked. This is a better etiquette, and a nobler attitude. It generates interest in what you say, while enhancing your respect.

The honourable Tābi'ī, Mujāhid Ibn Jabr رحمه الله تعالى recalled that Luqmān, the Wise رحمه الله تعالى, said to his son, "If another person was asked a question, never hasten to give the answer, as if you are going to gain booty or win a prize. By doing so, you will **belittle** the one who was asked, you will offend the questioner and you will draw the attention of the foolish people to your stupidity and ill-manner.

Shaykh Ibn Batta رحمه الله تعالى, the Hambalī jurist and muhaddith said, "I was with Abu 'Umar Az-Zāhid Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul Wāhid Al-Baghdādī the Imām and linguist, also known as Ghulāmu Tha'lab (غلام الثعلب) رحمه الله تعالى. He (Abū 'Umar رحمه الله تعالى) was asked regarding an

issue. I hastened and answered the enquirer. He turned to me and said, “Do you know the nosy and inquisitive ones?” Suggesting that I was a nosy person. This made me feel very embarrassed.”

BRIEF ADVICE TO MY DEAR MUSLIM SISTERS

When you intend to visit your relatives or your Muslim sisters, carefully select the appropriate day and the hour of your visit and its duration. There are appropriate and inappropriate times for paying visits even to relatives and friends.*

Ensure that your visit is pleasant, brief and enjoyable. Avoid turning it into a boring wearisome, inquisitive and lengthy visit. Instead, it should be a visit whose purpose is to rekindle and nourish an old friendship or kinship. The visit is desirable if it is short and considerate, and it is undesirable, if it is long and tiresome during which conversation moves from being purposeful and valuable to being aimless and useless. The honourable Tābi'ī, Muhammad Ibn Shihāb Az-Zuhrī رحمه الله تعالى said, "When a meeting becomes too long, shaytān then has a share in it."

---

* This also applies to phone calls. (translator)

Ensure that during a visit most, if not all your talk, is of value and benefit. **Keep away from backbiting, gossip and idle talk**. A wise Muslim woman does not have time for such talk.

WEDDINGS

The Sunnah of Attending a Wedding

If invited to a marriage ceremony or a wedding celebration, you should accept the invitation **unless it includes prohibited acts**. Attending a wedding is part of the noble sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Islām regards marriage as an act of worship and obedience to Allāh ﷻ. For this, the jurists have mentioned that, **it is preferable (*mustahab*) to contract the marriage in the masjid.**

This is based on a hadīth reported by Imām Tirmidhī and Imām Ibn Mājah رحمهما الله تعالى:

"Publicise the marriage, execute it in the masjid and celebrate it with the duff."

Another hadīth reported by Imām Ahmad and Al-Hākim and others supports the first part of the hadīth:

"Publicise the marriage."

It is also supported by a third hadīth reported by Imāms Ahmad, At-Tirmidhī, An-Nasāi and Ibn Mājah رحمهم الله تعالى:

"The difference between a legitimate (halāl) marriage and an illegitimate (harām) relationship is the presence of voices and the duff."

There is no dispute among Muslim scholars that in a wedding celebration, Rasūlullāh ﷺ allowed women to use the duff. The most valid opinion among some scholars is that men can also use the duff in order to **publicise** the marriage, thus making it known near and far[4]. The noble Islamic purpose of such **publicity** is to distinguish between an evil and illicit relationship and an Islamic, pure and halāl marriage. The hadīth mentioned above: "The difference between a legitimate (halāl) marriage and an illegitimate (harām) relationship is the presence of voices and the duff," is explained by our ulamā as follows,

By 'voice' is meant that the nikah should be announced and mentioned to the people. Voice also refers to the singing of legitimate anāshīd (Islamic Songs).

[4] Take note of the fact that the actual purpose of the duff was to **publicise** the marriage and not mere entertainment. (Translator)

Attending a wedding is one of the rights of brotherhood among Muslims. It fulfils the requirement of publicity and it reinforces the testimony of the marriage. It also gives you a chance to join your brethren in this pious act by which they complete half of Islām, which leaves only the second half for them to uphold. Attending a wedding also honours the husband and wife by having the relatives, friends and other pious people to share in their happiness. It blesses them with guests that pray to Allāh for their righteousness, success, affluence and prosperity.

The Manner of Attending Weddings

When you are invited, attend with the intention that you are attending a blessed and good invitation, one which is delightful and approved in the Sharī'ah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has also commanded us to attend such occasions. Dress appropriately within the confines of Sharī'ah. For such pleasant gatherings, the Sahābah ﷺ used to dress properly when they visited each other. When initiating or sharing in a discussion, make sure your conversation fits the happy occasion. Don't discuss such things which will depress those present or any other distasteful subject matter. A believer should be wise and considerable.

It is recommended that you congratulate the bride and bridegroom by reciting the du'ā of Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

بَارَكَ اللهُ لَكَ وَبَارَكَ عَلَيْكَ وَجَمَعَ بَيْنَكُمَا فِي خَيْرٍ

Baarakallahu laka wa baaraka 'laika wa jama'a bainakuma fi khair

May Allāh ﷻ bless you and bless your counterpart and may Allāh ﷻ tie your union with virtue. (Sunan Abī Dāwud, Sunan Tirmidhī, Sunan Ibn Mājah and Al-Hākim).

Do not use the commonly used phrase "with comfort and children," because this was the phrase used by the people of ignorance (Jāhiliyyah). Rasūlullāh ﷺ has prohibited it and Allāh ﷻ has replaced it with the prayer of Rasūlullāh ﷺ (as mentioned above). Sayyidah 'Āishah رضي الله عنها said, "When Rasūlullāh ﷺ married me, my mother led me into the house where the women of the Ansār were seated. They congratulated me by saying,

عَلَى الْخَيْرِ وَالْبَرَكَةِ ، وَعَلَى خَيْرِ طَائِرٍ

"May you have all the good, all the blessings and the best of luck." (Sahīh Bukharī)

Islām permits women to celebrate a wedding by singing tasteful songs accompanied by the beating of

the duff. Such poems and songs should not promote lust, lewd desires and sin. Instead, they should sing delightful and decent songs to express their happiness and joy with the marriage. Sayyidah ‘Āishah رضي الله عنها said, “A bride was led to her Ansārī husband. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “O ‘Āishah! Do you not have any items of entertainment? The Ansār love to be entertained.”“ (Sahīh Bukhārī) Rasulullah ﷺ was referring to singing and the beating of the duff.

Hāfidh Ibn Hajar رحمه الله تعالى in his book, Fathul Bāri, has stated that in one narration of Tabarānī, Sayyidah ‘Āishah رضي الله عنها recalled that the Prophet ﷺ asked, “Why did you not send with her (the bride), a girl to sing with the duff?” I enquired, “What should she sing?” He answered:

We are visiting you, We are visiting you,
If you greet us, we will greet you,
For your gold, bright and red, brought the
bride to your valley,
And it is your brown and tanned wheat that
made your virgins charming.

Songs sung at weddings should have delightful and decent meanings as this. Songs of lust, passion and immorality are strictly prohibited.

CONCLUSION

This is a collection of Islamic manners that were part of **the etiquette of your pious Muslim predecessors.** I presented them to you in a clear and understandable way so that you inculcate them and practice upon them. **The best place to follow these manners is at home** and the homes of your brothers. Do not overlook these etiquettes when dealing with your family and your Muslim brethren assuming that there is no need for it.

Your immediate family and friends are the most deserving of your good conduct and manners. In this regard, Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim رحمهما الله تعالى have reported that a man asked Rasūlullāh ﷺ, "O Prophet of Allāh, who deserves my best behaviour?" The Prophet ﷺ answered: "Your mother! Your mother! Your mother! Then your father, then the closer, and the closer among your relatives."

Beloved reader, do not overlook these manners when interacting with the appropriate people, and act properly and amicably with others. **If you do not**

behave properly, you degrade yourself, abuse the duty that you are entrusted with and abandon the guidance of Rasulullah ﷺ. Ask Allāh ﷻ to assist you in attaining His pleasure and the manners of His religion, and it is He who protects the pious.

May Allāh ﷻ protect you, your relatives and your beloved ones. May Allāh ﷻ help you obey His orders, remain obedient to Him, and follow the example of His Prophet ﷺ. May Allāh ﷻ grant you His love, grace and His generosity. May Peace and Salutations be upon our Prophet ﷺ, his family and his companions رضي الله عنهم. All praise is for Allāh, the Lord of the universe. Āmīn.

This was written in the hope of receiving your prayers.

(Shaykh) Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رحمه الله تعالى

About the Author

Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah رحمه الله تعالى was born in Aleppo (Syria) in the year 1917. He acquired elementary studies of deen in his home city and later took admission in the seat of learning of that time, the Al-Azhar University. From there he graduated in 1948. While in Cairo he had the esteemed opportunity of learning under the great Hanafī Turkish Scholar, ‘Allāmah Muhammad Zāhid Al-Kawtharī رحمه الله تعالى in whose footsteps he then followed for the rest of his life. Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh had benefited from various fountains of knowledge at that time. Among them were: Shaykh Ahmad Al-Zarqā, Shaykh Abū Zahrah, Shaykh Muhammad Rāghib Al-Tabbāgh رحمهم الله تعالى.

After returning from Cairo, Shaykh began passing on the ocean of knowledge that he acquired abroad. Not long thereafter he was forced into exile in Riyadh - Saudi Arabia. There he taught at the University of Imām Muhammad bin Sa‘ud for 23 years.

Like Shaykh is known for his mastery in the field of Hadīth, he had also mastered the other branches of knowledge like Fiqh (Jurisprudence), Language etc.

Shaykh had an immense love and attachment with the 'Ulamā of the indo-pak subcontinent. Among them were: Moulānā Muhammad Yūsuf Al-Binnorī, Moulānā Habībur Rahmān Al-A'zamī, Moulana Muhammad Yusuf Al-Kandehlawi, Moulāna Masīhullāh Khān and others رحمهم الله تعالى.

He visited numerous countries of the world for the purpose of spreading knowledge and meeting 'Ulamā. Some of those countries are: Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Tunisia, Morocco, South Africa, Indonesia, Brunei, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey and several European and American countries.

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رحمه الله تعالى breathed his last on 9th Shawwāl 1417 (16 February 1997)

He left behind a rich wealth of books and students. His books number up to 70, some of them being annotations of other classical works.

He was well applauded by his contemporaries as well as his teachers.

Some of his qualities:

His son, Shaykh Salman writes: “He was meticulous in his appearance and all other affairs.

He wouldn’t abuse anyone verbally (nor physically). He was extremely particular about Salāh in all conditions.

He would recite a portion of the Qur’an daily and would often shed tears whilst reciting or listening to the Holy Qur’ān. His heart was extremely soft and he use to get affected greatly when he heard of any plight of Muslims in any part of the Globe. He was extremely patient during times of difficulty and illness. I never heard him ever complaining about anything.

Shaykh رحمه الله تعالى would hardly sleep, valuing his time and spending it in the acquisition, compilation and propagation of knowledge. Some of his books were written or completed while on journey.

May Allāh ﷻ allow us to benefit from the students and works that the Shaykh رحمه الله تعالى left behind. (*Āmīn*)